

Current Facility

In 1982 the Town of Marion undertook a study of its responsibilities for oversight of Marion's Waterways. As a result The Department of Marine Resources was created and became operational on May 18th, 1983. The Appointment of a full time Director, who would serve as both Harbormaster and Shellfish Officer, was tasked with maintaining an orderly and secure harbor, control of shellfishing and oversight of the roughly 880 moorings. The study also resulted in construction of the 225 square foot Harbormasters Office atop the existing Island Wharf Bathhouse. The following year an appointment of a full time Assistant was approved.

A lot has changed in the nearly 40 years the Department has been in operation. The Department today is comprised of three full time employees with an additional 7 employees during the summer months. Total mooring numbers now stand at nearly 1300, coupled with vast increases in public access opportunities the total number of vessels utilizing Marion waters during the summer months is around 1700. Oversight and responsibilities of today's operations is 10 fold what it was in the mid-1980s.

Why / Right Size

The Marine Department is tasked with many responsibilities and duties, our most critical being the protection of life, safety, and property. As such, this new facility is being proposed to remain at the waterfront where it is most suited. Rapid access to the Department's vessels, lifesaving gear and equipment is critical to the fulfillment of this mission throughout the entire year. Currently the Marine Department operates out of three separate and individually inadequate locations, Island Wharf, Town Hall and Atlantis Drive. This arrangement results in a number of inefficiencies that hinder every facet of day to day operations. The current Island Wharf facility simply does not provide adequate storage for lifesaving gear, equipment, supplies, tools and materials crucial to the Department and the success of this mission nor does it allow for meeting space or code required accessibility for the citizens of Marion and visitors being served.

Consolidating our administrative functions to a single location is another important step toward ensuring we maintain and continue to improve our level of service. General Services Administration Guidelines designate an average of 190 square feet as the optimum workspace per person, leaving our office well short of meeting the federal benchmark. Lack of adequate space, as with storage, results in a very inefficient working environment. Phone calls, radio transmissions, and in-office meetings all overlap in the same space. Reconfiguration of some of the interior spaces has taken place however these changes have proven to be short term fixes for these problems.

Simply put, the Department outgrew the existing facility years ago. Working in conjunction with the Marine Resources Commission as well as multiple Town Departments and Boards, we have been very successful at maximizing public access opportunities through a variety of projects. Coupled with the ever increasing uses of Marion's Waterways and the availability of grant funding for projects such as these we feel this is the opportune time to get the Community involved and develop a consensus to move this much needed and overdue project forward.

What Changed in the Design? (Original Design vs. Reduced Design)

After the initial preliminary design was made public, in response to concerns expressed by some about the size, we took a hard look at the design with goal of reducing the size while still meeting the needs of our Department of Marine Resources. Among other things, we reduced office space and also eliminated the elevated bathrooms from the design as cost savings measures. Here are the changes made:

- Total footprint was 5,343 sf now down to 2,685 sf
- Building footprint was 2,528 sf now down to 1,790 sf

- New Elevated Public bathrooms removed in favor of renovation of existing ground level restrooms/showers (remaining public restrooms will be 2 stand-alone 9'x13', 117 ft² structures)
- ADA Ramp removed in favor of a handicapped accessible lift now accessible at ground level.
- Elevated Observation Deck removed. These areas will remain open space with possibility for future deck/patio construction
- Harbormaster / Shellfish office space reconfigured and large storage room eliminated
- New renderings illustrate how changes visually reduced the building's scale to better blend into the fabric of the waterfront and the Town.
- The reduced scale of the building has allowed for compliance with local height requirements without needing to seek relief.

Why Can't We Renovate

Any expansion of the existing building must meet or exceed FEMA and state building code regulations. In short, any addition would have to be elevated out of the flood zone. Additionally, any renovations to the existing building exceeding 50% of the "building's" value would trigger the entire structure, including those areas only being renovated to be made code compliant. The gross inadequacies of the existing facility along with flood zone and code requirements make a renovation/ expansion of the existing structure infeasible. This includes meeting ADA requirements for handicap access and fire code such as sprinkling the building. The proposed new harbormaster facility is situated in the NE corner of the property to allow for safe traffic flow to and from the facility, parking lots and other recreation activities supported at the site. This new building location better

accommodates storage of Department vessels, trailers and equipment under the building while opening up the site to the greatest extent possible for views to Sippican Harbor.

Funding Sources

We intend to apply to the Seaport Economic Councils Grant Program. This group has funded a substantial portion of the cost of similar projects in several waterfront municipalities around the Commonwealth. Additional funding including any matching funds will come issuing new debt. The annual debt service, including principal and interest, will be paid from the waterways account which has not carried any debt since FY16. We believe this can be done with little or no impact to current and future waterways fees.